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REFERENCES

London and New York: Routledge, 2009. Pp372. ISBN10: 0-415-99093-9 ISBN13: 978-0-415-99093-6.

1 A truly dense and elaborate collection, the *Dynamics and Performativity of Imagination: The Image between the Visible and the Invisible* is an anthology of interdisciplinary essays covering themes of imagination, creativity and the image, both material and mental, under perspectives and spectrums that are as diverse as the fields intersecting in the analyses. Indeed, the multifarious philosophical commitments and domains of the authors contributing to this anthology results in a compilation of approaches and interpretations that span from art and literature to theology, psychology or medical science and from Ancient Greek philosophy to modern medical imaging techniques. As a consequence, the reader is presented with a kaleidoscope of fragments that intersect but do not converge towards a solidly formulated epistemology or a clearly outlined methodology that could bridge theories of the image in the humanities and the sciences; nevertheless, it is precisely because of this kaleidoscopic quality that the anthology succeeds in depicting the complexity of its theme and constitutes an important contribution towards a discursive thinking of the "new media" and the status of imagination and performativity of the image in the modern world.

2 As stated in their introduction, editors Bernd Huppauf and Christoph Wulf base this project on the observation that "the imagination is absent from current discourse on images and imagery and this is not a matter of semantics but is the result of specific interpretations of and attitudes towards images" (1). Wishing to reverse the "anachronistic" quality of imagination and debunk the "reductionist simplifications (that) marginalize the imagination" (3) they promote the latter as a locus of interaction between cognitive and emotional responses and a privileged means of interpretation. As Huppauf and Wulf argue, the content of images can never be exhaustively rendered through verbal accounts and, therefore, when encountering an image, viewers inadvertently employ their "inner eye" in order to provide context. Given this hypothesis, *Dynamics and Performativity of Imagination: The Image between the Visible and the Invisible,* constitutes an interrogation of representation, an exploration of visibility and "the contingencies of" invisibility and an investigation on the accessibility and potentiality of the image, its performative functions and, in effect, the prominence of productive imagination as the future path in image theory.

3 Within this framework, Part I, entitled "Imagination, Fantasy and Creativity", provides the theoretical threads suggested for taking up the challenge posed by the editors and is intended to investigate "the connections between *the faculty of imagination* [...] *imagination, fantasy and creativity"*(21). Gert Mattenklott takes the lead with his article "Imagination" in which he discusses Kant's *Einbildungskraft,* a term referring specifically to the capacity to represent that which is absent, and attempts to sketch the relations between the different concepts of imagination denoted under the English term. Mattenklott reads Romantic German Literature and argues that imagination actually constitutes the liberating factor which allows the individual to escape the constraints of rigid reasoning and engage into creative processes of reflection and restructuring. The notion of restructuring existing systems with a view to producing new ones is especially relevant to aesthetics, which is central to Georges Didi-Huberman's "Aesthetic Immanence". The author defines immanence as a "generalized state of flux, the folding of each thing within each thing, ubiquitous life, the porous substance dedicated to turbulence – and with it, a critical effect on representation, a manner of dissolving the individual aspects in the milieu as a whole" (44) and chooses the Sea as its dominant paradigm. He proceeds to speak of metamorphosis and to suggest that imagination should not be treated teleologically; instead, it should be read as a metaphor, a gesture that shifts the focus from representation to depiction. The part is concluded with Dieter Mersch's "Imagination, Figurality and Creativity: Conditions of Cultural Innovation" and Ludger Schwarte's "Intuition and Imagination." Mercsh constructs a complex argument which promotes the paradox as the precondition of creativity. Paradoxical structures create disruptions that allow figurality to escape "the clutches of theology and metaphysics" and act as loci of interaction between three elements: *difference, reflexivity,* and *alterity*. What is more, paradoxes function as "media of alteration" and lead to "sudden movements of creative leaps" (63). Ludger Schwarte considers imagination as a "collective performance of reception" (67) and, after pinpointing the contingence entailed in every act of imagining and noting the trails of perception drawn by the presentation of a work of art, as well as their influence, concludes that "in imaginative processes schemes of social action, imaginative things and the architecture of presentation are interacting" (69). Subsequently, the author introduces intuition, the catalytic agent for the negation of the symbolic patterns structured by imagination (73)

and for the opening up of a space of possibility, where perception is transformed into a creative act and "the existence of the unforeseeable" (74) is acknowledged.

4 Part II, "A Look at Pictures – Pictures Look Back", is concerned with the "*chiastic structure of the look*" (79) and raises questions about the construction of the self as "imagining subjects," the relationship between pictures, seeing and (in)visibility, as well as the role of iconology in the construction of historical and cultural image practices. Maria José Mondzain, in "What is Seeing an Image?" contends that "the very composition of the image and of imaging operations is the source from which the very possibility of seeing and of seeing anything originates" (81) and supports his arguments by referring to Byzantine, Judaic and Islamic iconoclasm and the different pictorial attitudes that permeate them. Mondzain's notions of displacement and distance with regard to the gaze are taken up by Hans Belting in "The Gaze in the Image: A Contribution to an Iconology of the Gaze" which is an attempt at contributing to the anthropology of the image. The author elaborates on the patterns of interaction between the spectator and the image and the configurations of the gaze by drawing on both physical and technical images and exploring the function of the frame. Belting's iconology spans from the praxis of the gaze to the image of the gaze and, by way of examples taken from painting and photography to modern mediatic images, reinstates imagination as the dominant tool with which "we animate such media in order to penetrate them with our gaze and fill them with life [...] a prerequisite for looking [that] probably takes precedence over what we know as perception" (114). Mathias Obert, in "Imagination or Response? Some Remarks on the Understanding of Images and Pictures in Pre-modern China," embraces the catalytic importance of the image in the construction of the human beings' relationship with the world, yet challenges perception's dominance over bodily experience. The author reads pre-modern Chinese paintings and contends that their function was not voyeuristic *per se* but rather to create a connecting thread with the surrounding world and to provide insight on the means of achieving "the realization of a good life relative to the world" (117). The process of creating a picture is a practical one, argues Obert, instigated by motion rather than by the intent of mimesis, and, therefore, the conventional methods of "reading a picture" are not applicable, since images are not signs to be decoded but triggers of personal experiences intended to prompt the spectators' response and engagement in correlation with their own life-situation. The essay concluding this part is a blatant example of the collection's diversity: David Poeppel and Clare Stroud take us from Chinese pre-modern art to "The Nature of Face Recognition: A Perspective from the Cognitive Neurosciences" and discuss the importance of facial recognition in image making but also elaborate on the issues raised by the problem of invariance. Building on E. H. Gombrich's work on the question of invariance and the idea of "beholder's share" (137) the authors provide a detailed mapping of the problems and preoccupations cognitive neuroscientists are faced with and the opportunities presented by technologies of imaging. What is more, they succeed in providing a cross-disciplinary contribution that highlights commonly shared preoccupations between scientists and humanists and effectively delineates the necessity for collaboration between disciplines.

5 Part III, "Body Images and Body Imaginations" consists of essays that take a step back from abstract theorizing of the image and turn to the significance of the body, as a source of imaging and a generator of imaginative practices. Gunter Gebauer, in his essay "The Neapolitan Gesture," uses Wittgenstein's theories on the body and its dependence on cultural conditions to illustrate how "it is through the common body that ordinary

language is able to function" (163). For Gebauer, gestures exemplify how the body is a generator of images which develop and reform through social interaction and consequently becomes a source of rules of interaction since, "to understand a gesture, we need knowledge going beyond the abilities required in a given situation" (164). This thread line is further developed by Christoph Wulf according to whom "ritual enactments and bodily performances of social life produce mental images which, when recalled from memory, are less material and intense than perceived images" (166). Wulf's "Images of Social Life" is, in fact, focused on images of daily life, formed in the process of people's constantly repetitive actions. The author defines these social images as body-based, historically and culturally-determined, performative (a quality resulting from corporeality) and mimesis-generated, and distinguishes imagination as the means of combining the social imaginary with pre-existing collective and individual images for the production of new images and their projection to the future. The ways in which modern media activate mimetic processes and create fertile ground for the activation of the imagination via bodily movement, lie at the heart of the three following essays which revolve around different examples of graphing social rituals into consciousness and transforming social practices into mental images. Erika Fischer-Lichter writes about "Performative Spaces and Imagined Spaces: How Bodily Movement Sets the Imagination in Motion" and uses theatric performances to argue that "it is one's own movement in space that sets the imagination in motion" (179). The author suggests that as spectators watch the movements of performers and listen to the surrounding sounds they can perceive the space they are situated in as fluid and ever-changing and consequently arrive at a stage of liminality, given that the aesthetic experience in question is an experience of destabilization and disturbance. Fischer-Lichter reinforces her argument by comparing the experience of the theatre to that of a visiting a museum and K. Ludwig Pfeiffer expands by writing on "Media Images, Sports Rituals and the Imaginary" where he substitutes bodily movement with media images. Pfeiffer's analysis draws on philosophical and literary traditions and refers to the ways sports images and rituals trigger the imagination by way of their reproduction and intensification by the media. In the author's view, the link between sports, their mediatic reenactment and the spectators' emotional and thought processes "offers reconcretizations for external and internal perceptions formerly called imaginative" (195), and result in a renewed diffusion of the real. This part is concluded with Peter Sloterdijk's "Ferocious Images," an article which investigates manifestations of violence and, more specifically, "inner-family violence" and "bellicose ferocity" (202). Using Greek mythology and European legends as a springboard, Sloterdijk highlights the salience of violence and its hold on the imaginary, as well as the connotations of power bore within it, and contends that in contemporary civilizations of electronic media "the image of violence can have an effect and be read firstly as its continuation and duplication [...] and secondly as their refraction and dilution, as their reflection in something which is not them and which confronts them as an opposing power" (206). Moreover, the author postulates that modern day manifestations of violence (ranging from representations of warfare to cinematic representations of horror) resonate the post-modern condition created by technological advances in which the status of subjectivity has changed considerably, to the extent that "to be a subject now means to serve as the medium of explosions" (212).

6 These references to technology and the images produced by the media introduce the issues discussed in Part IV, "Indeterminacy and the Fuzziness of Images," which elaborates on the premise that blurriness is not only an inherent quality of all images but

also a quality of the utmost importance since "fuzziness is a category that embraces both the visual and the cognitive and essentially distinguishes the image from operations of logic that underlie realistic theories of the image" (217). Within this context, Gottfried Boehm writes about "Indeterminacy: On the Logic of the Image" where he reads impressionistic paintings and the ways spectators engage in a free play of meaning-production instigated by colour and form and based not only on the external reality of *what* they see but also on the sensations effected. For Boehm, this constitutes the "logic of the images," a manner of interpretation that is specific to the images and can only be activated by or applied to them, and accentuates the "potentiality" of the image, in other words the infinite possibilities of reconstruction or simulation of reality. Bernd Huppauf performs a further theoretical elucidation on the concept of "fuzziness" in his article "Between Imitation and Simulation: Towards an Aesthetics of Fuzzy Images", which proposes that fuzziness transcends visual representation by loosening the bond between the picture and its referent and by signaling a withdrawal from reality since only a degree of similarity is maintained. The quality of indeterminacy, for Huppauf, is not an indication of failure, but a way of drawing the gaze into a sphere of uncertainty and consequently disorientation, maintaining a relationship between image and the imaged through insinuation, creating an entrance for imagination which simultaneously liberates the images from (arid) representation and necessitates a linguistic transfer, the existence of a narrative as the sole means of fixing an image. What is more, Huppauf pinpoints the asymmetry between sharpness which "exists as a singular only" and unsharpness, "a multitude [which] has degrees and shades" (232) and so relates the advent of these concepts to the advent of photography. Photography is also Rebecca Schneider's focal interest. In "A Small History (of) Still Passing", Schneider uses Walter Benjamin's and Roland Barthes' writings on photography but also Homi Bhabha's notion of "time lag" to discuss the still as a link bridging the gap between live performance (passing in time) and photography (arresting time) and to argue in favour of the "interanimation" between theatre and photography, as well as a "schismatic reverberation across media and across time in a network of ongoing response-ability" (266). Gabriele Brandstetter tackles the connections between different art forms in a different manner; in "Scribbling, Scarping off, painting over: Effacing Pictures in Literary Texts," the author purports that this relationship is not one of competition but, instead, a matter of transference and elaborates on the idea that the creation of images with the assistance of the imagination invariably involves their erasure. Brandstetter contributes a poetological reflection of mimesis and its relationship to fiction based on the images of Pygmalion and Laocoon and, while reading texts by W. G. Sebald, Hoffmann, Balzac, and Hofmannsthal, establishes literature as a locus where the picture is effaced and linguistically re-enacted or re-animated through the activation of imagination: "seeing as painting has replaced the creation of an actual picture, the imagination as a constantly re-creative power" (273). More interestingly, since the painting of the picture has been subdued to the narrating of it, the "*homo pictor* is the *homo narrator*" (274), which implies a series of mobile configurations, elusive images and "shadow figures," a concept analysed in the final essay of this part. Martin Puchner's "Kierkegaard's Shadow Figures" is clearly distinguished from the other essays included in this part, mainly due to the absence of a direct encounter with the image. The author's focal interest is the theatre, specifically Platonist Theater (author's term) which is revisited through the lens of Kierkegaard's seminal doctoral thesis "The Concept of Irony with Continual Reference to Socrates" and the respective strategies of reception. Puchner elevates the theatre to the prominent

cultural practice of the visual and stages a philosophical analysis of theatrical representation in relation to Plato's dancing shadows in the cave, according to which the act of looking on the stage is interrupted by the after-image of the theater and the act of seeing is integrally linked to the act of contemplation.

7 The final part of this collection, entitled "Constructions of the Visual," is dedicated mostly to film, as a medium that not only reflects but also reshapes the conditions depicted, and scientific imaging techniques which are "neither likenesses nor objective means of representation, but rather the result of constructions that are produced with the assistance of mathematical algorithms" (297). The section is led by W. J. T. Mitchell's "The Unspeakable and the Unimaginable: Word and Image in a Time of Terror," which investigates word and image as intersecting one another in a logical space and which, via the examination of war imagery and pictures of atrocity, employs theories of trauma to define the unspeakable and the unimaginable as indeterminate and unfixed rhetorical tropes that "simultaneously invoke and overcome the limitations of language and depiction, discourse and display" (300). According to Mitchell, both the unthinkable and the unimaginable involve a prohibition on representation and both are always temporary, which is made explicit with the example of the Abu Graib photographs and the impossibility of the blocking of their circulation. Trauma is the trope employed in Gertrud Koch's "Face and Mass: Toward an Aesthetic of the Cross-Cut in Film" as well, specifically the fragmentary qualities and flash-like lack of coherence that is characteristic of traumatic memories. Koch elaborates on these qualities and their renowned similarity to a photographic image and suggests that flashbacks can be paralleled to filmic cross-cutting where traumatic disruption is reenacted in montage.The nature of montage itself, however, is controversial, the author contends, since its multiperspectival quality can function either towards a convergence of identities or towards a spatiotemporal rubble. In effect, Koch promotes early film theory as the ideal form that most successfully realizes the full potential of filmic semiosis in capturing the subtle nuances of experience. The final two articles of this part shift the focus to the infiltration of scientific practices into the practice, but also semiotics, of imaging. Roland Posner and Dagmar Schmauks write about "Synaesthesia: Physiological Diagnosis, Practice of Perception, Art Program: A Semiotic Re-analysis" and embark on an investigation of the "sign status of the perceived objects which trigger synaesthetic sensations" (323). The distinction between constitutional synaesthesia (when a real sensation is triggered), and synaesthesia that results from an encounter with art (in which the sensation evoked on the spectator is only mental), as well as the consequent argument that the latter is increasingly conceived as an intellectual parallel to the physiological condition and, thus, the contemporary world characterized by an increased intellectualization of perception is neither innovative nor groundbreaking. Yet the article constitutes an informative and enlightening overview on the subject. Britta Schinzel's "Recognisability and Visual Evidence in Medical Imaging versus Scientific Objectivity," on the other hand, seems to adopt a bolder stance. Schinzel ventures to explore the development of imaging via mathematical, statistical and technological frameworks with a formidable statement: "the powerful impact of today's scientific images enables the victory of science over the text-bound humanities" (340). She presents medical imaging technologies and their applications and touches upon issues of objectivity (previously claimed by the image), as well as the immense possibilities presented by the ever-increasing complexity of mathematical configurations and data used for the creation of these images, and contends that, despite allegations of objectivity and unaffectedness,

medical imaging is also subject to subjectivity, manifest in the method chosen and interpretation of data provided. What is more, Schinzel suggests that brain imaging especially bears considerable ramifications for the self and the essence of the human subject which is now represented by neurochemical and neurophysiological mediums (355) and has become transparent, "in electronic form".

8 Undoubtedly, this is a very elaborate collection of essays which constitutes an illustrative example of the complexities but also the fascination involved in the cross-pollination of diverse fields and disciplines. The erudite studies composing it are as multifaceted as the concept it seeks to address, *imagination*, and its greatest success arguably lies in its providing a wide range of issues under examination, questions and areas pertaining to both the humanities and the sciences. Under this light, the sometimes loose connections between essays in the separate parts is not only negligible but also justified, and the lack of radicality in some of the analyses does not hinder the production of new directions in the scholarship of the image. The introductions between parts constitute an enlightening source of information and an efficient connecting device for those readers wishing to use this collection as a reference book and the index of names adds to this function – although an index of terms might be desirable as well. All in all, although neither a specific methodology nor a concrete epistemology for the exploration of such wide-breadth interdisciplinarity are offered, an impressive array of possible directions is delineated, the way for further investigations is paved and the potential for new ontological reconfigurations and ways of perception is sharply outlined.

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